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ABSTRACT

Principals play a unique role in school and student outcomes. This paper presents findings of a study that explored how principals' leadership behaviors influenced teachers' sense of efficacy. Specifically, the paper describes how principals in three middle schools influenced teachers' sense of efficacy and affected instructional and school improvement from a teacher perspective. Bandura's (1977, 1986) social cognitive learning theory of self-efficacy provided the theoretical framework. The first phase of the study surveyed 280 teachers in 10 schools to determine the level of personal teaching efficacy (PTE) and general teaching efficacy (GTE). Three middle schools were selected: one with the highest reported GTE, one with the highest reported PTE, and one with the lowest combined GTE and PTE. Data for the second phase were gathered through observation and interviews with 34 teachers. The study identified 10 leadership behaviors: models behavior, believes in teacher capacity, inspires group purpose, promotes teacher empowerment and shared decision making, recognizes teacher efforts, provides personal and professional support, manages student behavior, promotes a sense of community, fosters teamwork and collaboration; and encourages innovation and continual growth. In summary, the study showed that principals' direct behaviors, as well as indirect symbolic forms of instructional leadership, influence teachers' work and its outcomes. Three tables and one figure are included. (Contains 52 references.) (LMI)

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DOCUMENTING THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR ON TEACHER EFFICACY

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association

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DOCUMENTING THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR ON TEACHER EFFICACY

Abstract: The primary purpose of this investigation is to explore specific leadership behaviors of principals that influence teachers' sense of efficacy. Specifically, this study describes how principals in three middle schools influence teachers' sense of efficacy and impact instructional and school improvement from a teacher perspective. Bandura's social cognitive learning theory of self-efficacy provides the theoretical framework. The sample for this second phase of an earlier study includes 34 teachers from three middle schools. Qualitative data build on earlier findings and propose ten leadership behaviors that reinforce and sustain teacher efficacy.

Empirical studies on teacher perceptions of school leadership have contributed greatly to knowledge of the effects of principals' behaviors on alterable conditions within schools in which teaching and learning take place (Rosenholtz, Bassler & Hoover-Dempsey, 1986; Janzi & Leithwood, 1995; Hallinger & Heck, 1995). Such findings legitimize numerous accounts in the literature revealing the unique leadership role principals play in school and student outcomes (Hart & Bredeson, 1996). Nonetheless, few studies involve systematic inquiry into the specific strategies principals apply either directly or indirectly to influence a sense of optimism and efficacy among teachers toward the future of education.

Research is rich with evidence that teachers' sense of efficacy significantly relates to student achievement and changes in teacher behavior (Ross, 1993); however, studies indicate that principals need to be persuaded to act on this strong and positive linkage and focus on conditions that help teachers acquire and sustain feelings of competence and worth (Rossmiller, 1992). While principals express the importance of student learning as their primary responsibility, they reportedly spend only a small proportion of their time mediating these outcomes (Hoy & Miskel, 1991; Leithwood, Steinbach & Begley, 1992). Although principals' role perceptions are often consistent with reform movements of general societal patterns (Hart & Bredeson, 1996) and are characterized by endless lists of expectations and responsibilities, researchers find little change in principals' behavior over time (Duke, 1987).

In a time when public criticism of teachers and schools is pervasive, teachers predictably experience significant doubts about the value of their work with students. Effective principals convey a sense of certainty that teachers <u>can</u> and <u>do</u> influence student achievement and that students are capable learners. With ever-increasing expectations, principals are presented with numerous challenges and responsibilities in their daily work. However, the extent to which principals actively engage in key instructional behaviors (Heck, Larsen, and Marcoulides, 1990) and leadership practices which help give direction, purpose, and meaning to teachers' work (Leithwood, Janzi and Fernandez, 1993) offers credence to the continuing notion that principals <u>do</u> make a difference.

This study builds on an earlier investigation (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995) which explored the relationships between transformational leadership behaviors of principals and teacher efficacy in selected middle schools involved in significant building-level change efforts. The purpose of this study is to facilitate a more in-

depth probe into specific leadership behaviors and practices affecting teacher efficacy within high and low efficacy schools.

This investigation is guided by the following questions: a) In what ways do principals influence teachers' sense of efficacy? and b) Do differences in teacher perceptions of principal impact exist across high and low efficacy schools?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following review of the literature provides an overview of the construct of teacher efficacy and includes empirical studies, which to varying degrees, address the influence of principals' leadership on teachers' sense of efficacy.

Defining Teacher Efficacy

A major problem in reviews of the literature is the lack of consistent definition of the construct of teacher efficacy. Smylie (1991) identified constructs of a similar nature such as: self-concept, self-worth, expectations, responsibility, and locus of control and maintained these constructs are often used interchangeably, thus confusing the meaning of efficacy as well as its relationship to teachers' work. Furthermore, Woolfolk & Hoy (1990) underscored the need to further clarify the construct of self-efficacy, because researchers using the term tend to define and measure it in different ways. For instance, investigations employing assessment instruments measuring teacher efficacy have indicated meaningful relationships between teacher efficacy and student learning (Guskey, 1984) as well as other teacher characteristics and classroom behaviors (Ashton & Webb, 1982; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey, 1981). Finally, Ross (1993) cautioned that individual studies may be using different conceptions and definitions of teacher efficacy, which results in inappropriate comparisons across empirical studies. For the purposes of this paper, Bandura's theory of self-efficacy is used as a framework to define teacher efficacy as a teacher's perception of his or her ability to affect student performance.

The Theoretical Framework

Bandura's (1977, 1986) cognitive social learning theory of self-efficacy guided this study. Bandura defined self-efficacy as "people's judgement of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (1986, p. 391), and treated the construct of self-efficacy as a multidimensional trait. Educational definitions of teacher efficacy reflect this conception and are consistent with Bandura's two dimensional construct of teacher efficacy. Bandura's dimension of outcome expectations, that people can believe that certain actions will produce certain results, has been reconceptualized as "a general belief about the power of teaching to reach difficult children" (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993 p. 357), or simply, what I think we can do to make a difference with students (Hipp, in press), and labeled as, general teaching efficacy (GTE). Further, researchers associated Bandura's dimension of efficacy expectations, that if people do not feel capable of performing such actions they may neither initiate nor persist in them, with earlier definitions (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Ashton, Buhr & Crocker, 1984; Gibson & Dembo, 1984), as the belief in one's own ability to make a difference in student achievement or what I think I can do to make a difference with students (Hipp, in press), and labeled this dimension, personal teaching efficacy (PTE).

Linking Teacher Efficacy and Principal Leadership Behaviors

Teacher Efficacy and Performance Accomplishments

To further clarify the construct of self-efficacy, Bandura (1977, 1986) found that judgements of personal efficacy are based on four types of information including performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences (observing the modeling of others), verbal persuasion, and emotional states. When compared to other sources, performance accomplishments, based on personal mastery expectations, was found to have the strongest affect on self-efficacy. In an educational sense, teachers' beliefs about their own capabilities determine their behavior, their thought patterns, and their emotional reactions in challenging situations. This array of beliefs then becomes evident in the choices teachers make, the effort they expend, and the degree of persistence they lend to a task. Appraisals of success tend to increase self-efficacy, while appraisals of repeated failure diminish it.

In his study of eight "ordinary metropolitan secondary schools, Rossmiller (1992) found that principals' work with teachers was the area most likely to affect quality of teachers' work life; however, with the exception of one private school, principals showed little concern and no systematic attempt to provide teachers with frequent feedback on their performance. Newmann, Rutter & Smith (1989) provide evidence to support these results in that organizational factors and principal responsiveness were found to be more significantly related to teacher efficacy than demographic features over which practitioners have no control.

Viewing teacher efficacy as a norm-referenced rather than self-referenced construct, researchers maintain teachers evaluate their own effectiveness in comparison to their peers (Ashton, Webb & Doda, 1983). Unfortunately, the structure of our schools does not lend itself to teachers observing other teachers in action, nor regular observations from school principals. As a result, teachers often develop unrealistic appraisals of their own behavior based on misperceptions of what other teachers do. Such misperceptions foster a widespread feeling of professional uncertainty (Lortie, 1975). In reality, most teachers lack the educational experiences that promote the collaborative support needed to eliminate negative feelings; rather they prefer to maintain closed classrooms when working with students.

Studying context variables and teacher efficacy, Guskey (1987) found teachers assume greater responsibility for student successes as compared to failures and assumed a stronger sense of efficacy for group versus single student successes. Moreover, positive and negative performance outcomes were differentiated, as teachers attributed successes to themselves and failure to outside factors. Midgely, Feldhauer & Eccles (1989) build on these findings in a study of 1,329 students transitioning from elementary to junior high school and found that teacher efficacy beliefs had a stronger impact on low-achieving than on high-achieving students. Investigators found this intriguing given the tendency of principals to assign low efficacy teachers to groups of low-achieving students (Ashton & Webb, 1986):

> These data indicate that the opposite would make more sense--that it would be particularly important to assign teachers with a high sense of efficacy to

> classes of low-achieving students because higher-achieving students appear more impervious to both the positive and negative effects of teacher efficacy beliefs. (p. 256).

The findings of this study have implications for emphasizing the importance of describing student characteristics in studies measu

Teacher Efficacy and Motivation

Appraisals of outcomes and feedback are generally conceived of as a cognitive process. Similar to the role that cognition plays in acquiring and regulating behavior, motivation, which deals with persistence of behavioral outcomes, is also partly grounded in cognitive activity. By predicting future outcomes, one can produce motivators for future behavior. More than simply a response strengthener, Bandura (1986) views reinforcement as a motivational tool that influences behaviors by creating expectations for certain results.

Motivation is also derived from the goals one sets and the resulting self assessment of one's performance. For instance, teachers' self-rewarding reactions are conditional on achieving a determined level of mastery, and self-inducements to persist are created until such goals are achieved. Negative outcomes may also motivate individuals to change or correct their behavior. However, if a teacher possesses a feeling of futility, contextual interventions will need to work to restore a positive belief. Thus, Bandura's theory adds to the predictive value of feedback and various interventions on change in teacher behavior.

Ashton (1984) used a motivational framework to develop a teacher education program in response to organizational conditions in schools which were perceived to reduce teachers' ability to develop a strong sense of efficacy. The purpose of this program was to "foster commitment to conceptions of ability that recognize the human potential for learning and development" (p. 29), and to help teachers identify their efficacy beliefs and how these beliefs would be evident in their behavior. Ashton's study revealed eight dimensions that distinguished high from low efficacy teachers: a) a sense of personal accomplishment, b) positive expectations for student behavior and achievement, c) personal responsibility for student learning, d) strategies for achieving objectives, e) positive affect, f) a sense of control, g) a sense of common teacher-student goals, and h) democratic decision-making.

Later findings (Ashton & Webb, 1986) revealed teacher attitudes about teaching and the organizational influences upon their sense of efficacy. They found that differences in efficacy beliefs influenced behavior and were reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of their principals. Principal behaviors supporting teacher motivation and student achievement included: a) recognizing and supporting efforts; b) clarifying roles and expectations; c) encouraging a sense of competence and confidence in teachers and students; d) empowering teacher decision-making; e) buffering staff against classroom intrusions; and f) building bonds of community within the school.

For most teachers, student learning or progress is a necessary inducement for teachers to decide to remain in the profession. Rosenholtz, Bassler & Hoover-

Dempsey (1986) surveyed 1,213 teachers in 78 elementary schools and explored ten organizational conditions that provided teachers with inducements to make contributions and emphasized goals for assessing effectiveness, and motivating and directing activities within the school. They maintained that effective schools relied almost exclusively on their organizational goals as incentives to attract and retain teachers.

Rosenholtz and her colleagues found several organizational factors related to the role of principal that predicted teacher learning: a) principal collegiality, b) recruitment and socialization of new entrants, c) goal setting within the school, d) instructional coordination, e) principal's evaluation practices, f) participation in decision-making, g) school-level management of student behavior, and h) teacher collaboration with colleagues. Most importantly, clear goals were determined to define and structure principal interventions to facilitate teacher learning. Rosenholtz (1985) added that collective responsibility for student learning and problem solving issues in collegial environments greatly reduced teacher and principal uncertainty about the achievement of instructional goals.

Finally, Rosenholtz believed that teacher competence and the behaviors of principals may have reciprocal effects. For instance, as principals' actions help shape school conditions contributing to teacher competence, teachers who feel competent may, in turn, promote supportive and facilitative behaviors of principals. Furthermore, principals who feel certain about the quality of their teachers' abilities and motivation may give up their need to control and empower teachers to make collective decisions. As success increases, so may teachers' commitment to norms encouraging collegiality and continuous growth, familiar characteristics of successful schools (Little, 1981).

In 1982, Fuller, Wood, Rapopart & Dornbusch explored the importance of the role of efficacy in significantly influencing student performance and organizational outcomes. They distinguished organizational efficacy from performance efficacy. *Organizational efficacy* referred to a staff member feeling a sense of efficacy in acquiring a valued outcome controlled by another person in a higher level of the organization. *Performance efficacy* suggested one's perceived efficacy in performing his or her own work task, independent of social interactions with colleagues and administrators in the organization.

Fuller and his colleagues assumed that teachers would make choices to perform tasks as a result of incentives and social norms based on whether or not they felt the could obtain a valued outcome. However, these personal choices may not always be in line with the goals of the organization. For instance, teachers may feel a sense of performance efficacy but not a sense of organizational efficacy. The study concluded with specific propositions related to the pattern of interaction between teachers and principals to guide research and future practice related to efficacy in schools. The findings have implications for instructional leaders guiding reform efforts.

Consistent with these findings, Hipp and Bredeson (1995) studied 280 high and low efficacy teachers in 10 middle schools and found statistically significant

relationships between transformational leadership behaviors and two dimensions of teacher efficacy, general teaching efficacy (GTE) and personal teaching efficacy (PTE. Leadership factors most strongly related to GTE included modeling behavior, inspiring group purpose, and provides contingent rewards; whereas, models behavior and provides contingent rewards were most strongly correlated to PTE. Moreover, total leadership behavior was significantly related to both GTE and PTE. All significant relationships between these transformational leadership behaviors and teacher efficacy showed GTE to be higher than PTE. Although these behaviors were perceived primarily as indirect influences on student performance, they emerged as powerful mechanisms that principals can apply to mediate student learning through teacher efficacy.

In summary, a review of the literature shows various relationships to teachers' sense of efficacy, many of which involve alterable variables which can be influenced by the principal. Nonetheless, norms of isolation, mediocrity, and fear of failure, conditions endemic in our schools today, can greatly impede efforts by school principals to influence teachers' sense of efficacy. As Lortie (1975) noted,

> Teachers are not sure they can make all their students learn. They hope for widespread or even universal effectiveness, but such aspirations receive too little reinforcement to yield assurance. Thus they are ready to accept indications of partial effectiveness as the basis for pride. (p. 132)

Since this study little has changed (McLaughlin, 1986; Lieberman & Miller, 1991). Though empirical studies verify the influence of principals' leadership behavior on teacher efficacy, field-based examples from teachers' perspectives are scarce.

METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this study was to facilitate a more in-depth probe into specific leadership behaviors and practices affecting teacher efficacy. A secondary purpose was to determine whether or not differences in teacher perceptions of principal impact exist across high and low efficacy schools. A qualitative inductive multi-case study (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989) was conducted to investigate generalizations across cases.

Data Sources

Data were initially collected to verify and build on transformational leadership behaviors affecting teacher efficacy (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995). The addition of qualitative research provides insight into identifying how principals manifest behaviors impacting teacher efficacy and the contexts for those leadership behaviors from a teacher's point of view. Drawing from the 10 schools in the preliminary study, three case sites were purposefully selected based on aggregated levels of teacher efficacy by building according to the following criteria: Harmony Middle School, the school with the highest reported general teaching efficacy (GTE); Homewood Middle School, the school with the highest reported personal teaching efficacy (PTE); and Pleasantview Middle School, the school with the lowest reported combined GTE and PTE. GTE and PTE were derived from the responses of 280 teachers in 10 schools on an adapted version of Gibson and Dembo's (1984) Teacher

Efficacy Scale including only items yielding acceptable reliability coefficients (GTE = .75 and PTE = .78). Initially, all 10 schools were identified by educational experts across the state for their involvement in significant building-level change efforts.

Schools varied in size (teachers and students), location, structure (grade levels), percentage of teachers interviewed, and background of principal (see Table 1). Ms. G, the principal at Harmony Middle School (High GTE) which is located in a small, "blue collar" school district of approximately 2,100 students, was in her third year as principal of this school. Aside from being one of the youngest educators on staff and having taught five years at Harmony, Ms. G moved up from the ranks, the only school in which she had ever taught to become principal.

Ms. M, the principal at Homewood Middle School (High PTE) which is located in a small, "provincial" school district of 750 students, was in her fourth year as principal of this school and served as principal in the district's only elementary school as well. Ms. M had accepted the principalship at Homewood after teaching 18 years both within and outside the school district. Her K-12 and higher education experience involved classroom teaching, working as a Title 1 teacher and reading specialist, and supervising student teachers.

Mr. U, the principal at Pleasantview Middle School (Low Efficacy) which is located in a small, "progressive" school district of 2,700 students, was in his eighth year as principal of this school. Prior to his assignment at Pleasantview, he taught Title 1 in the district's middle and high schools for four years, taught social studies at the high school for four years, and served as assistant principal at the high school one year.

Data Collection

Data were gathered using structured interviews, observation, and field notes. A sample of 34 teacher volunteers were interviewed across schools representing: grade levels, assignments (core area and non-core area), gender, and years of experience in the building. Since 25 teachers (86%) at Harmony Middle School volunteered to participate in the interviews, Ms. G selected a representative sample of six female and six male teachers, 41% of teachers on staff. Due to lower staff size at Homewood Middle School, all teachers available on the days of the interviews participated including 4 females and 6 males, or 83% of the staff. At Pleasantview Middle School, because fewer teachers expressed an interest in the interview process than was desired, the Learning Support Teacher recruited a representative sample including 7 females and 5 males, 43% of teachers on staff. Interviews lasted approximately 25-40 minutes and were conducted over a one-month period. High and low efficacy schools were purposefully included in this phase to explore similarities and differences in perceptions among teachers in varying contexts regarding facilitative principal behavior.

An interview protocol was developed which consisted of open-ended questions probing sources of teacher efficacy and behaviors of principals deemed most important to acquiring and maintaining a sense of competence in teaching. A sampling of teacher interview questions is displayed in Table 2. All interviews were script-taped, audiotaped, and later transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

The issue of how principals create and sustain teacher efficacy originated from a preliminary study on principals' transformational leadership (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995). The theory of transformational leadership, first conceptualized by Burns (1978) and subsequently adapted by Bass (1985), has since been studied most extensively in educational organizations by Leithwood and his associates (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1993; Leithwood, 1993, Janzi & Leithwood, 1995) in the context of restructuring. Transformational leadership characterizes leaders as visionary, charismatic, intellectually stimulating, and focused on innovation, creativity, achievement and growth (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Leithwood (1993) uses a generic meaning to describe transformational leadership in the context of change and restructuring, as building commitment to the organization and fostering growth in teacher capacity.

Based on the work of Podsakoff, MacKensie, Moorman & Tetter (1990), Leithwood, Jantzi and Fernandez (1993) used seven dimensions to measure teacher attitudes on transformational leadership practices in schools involved in the implementation of a change innovation employing The Nature of Leadership Survey (Leithwood, 1993). A more recent factor analysis conducted by Hipp and Bredeson (1995) based on 280 teacher ratings yielded five dimensions (factor loadings $\geq$.60) on each).

To compare and expand findings of the relationship between principals' leadership behavior and teachers' sense of efficacy (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995), an adaptation of Leithwood's conception of transformational leadership behavior was used as a template for this study. Case studies relied on analytic generalization to examine congruence to earlier statistical findings related to the five dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors adapted from the work of Leithwood and his associates (1993): models behavior, inspires group purpose, provides contingent rewards, holds high performance expectations, and provides support. Leithwood et al's descriptions as modified are displayed in Table 3.

A comparative case-study design was employed to identify themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). "Comparing as many differences and similarities in data as possible...tends to force the analyst to generate categories, their properties, and their interrelations as he tries to understand his data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 55). Thus, relying on inductive coding, pattern codes were used to summarize and group teacher responses across the three schools into common themes. These themes were compared to the aforementioned dimensions of transformational leadership. Moreover, researcher notes and color-coding were used to organize thoughts, note reflections, and bracket important quotations.

Next, a computer file by question was developed and comments were separated by school to help note inconsistencies within and across schools and facilitate the process of analyzing salient comments, behaviors, and feelings emphasized most regularly. Finally, comments were categorized under emergent themes. On-site observations and field notes were also used to support or negate preliminary findings.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of this study using a cross-case analysis are reported in two sections. First, emergent themes identified across schools are organized for congruence to earlier statistical findings around five transformation leadership factors: models behavior, inspires group purpose, provides contingent rewards, holds high performance expectations, and provides support as described in Table 3 (Leithwood, Jantzi & Fernandez, 1993). Second, additional leadership themes related to teachers' sense of efficacy not explicitly measured in The Nature of Leadership Survey are identified.

Congruence between Preliminary Findings and Interview Data

Earlier statistical findings (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995) suggested that not all transformational leadership factors were associated with teachers' general and personal teaching efficacy. Models behavior, provides contingent rewards, and inspires group purpose were significantly related to teachers' GTE. Whereas, models behavior and provides contingent rewards were significantly related to teachers' PTE. Moreover, total transformational leadership was significantly related to both PTE and GTE. Combining qualitative and quantitative analyses validate the relationship between transformational leadership behavior and teacher efficacy in a way that could not have been accomplished with either data set alone. Interview data across schools have enriched preliminary findings by clarifying and extending the conception of leadership behaviors teachers believe reinforce and sustain their sense of efficacy (see Figure 1).

Principal Leadership Behaviors

- Models Behavior ------->
  -- Believes in Teacher Capacity
- Inspires Group Purpose ------->
  -- Promotes Teacher Empowerment and Shared Decision-Making
- Recognizes Teacher Efforts and Accomplishment ------->
- Provides Personal and Professional Support ------->
- Manages Student Behavior ------->
- Promotes a Sense of Community ------->
  -- Fosters Teamwork and Collaboration
  -- Encourages Innovation and Continual Growth

Teacher Efficacy

FIGURE 1: Emergent Leadership Themes Impacting Teacher Efficacy

Models Behavior

Interview data supported preliminary findings indicating that models behavior was significantly related to teacher efficacy. To assist the reader in recalling school names, each school will be addressed by an abbreviation of its descriptor, that is, the high GTE school, Harmony Middle School, as HiGTE, the high PTE school, Homewood Middle School, as HiPTE, and the low efficacy school, Pleasantview Middle School, as LoEFF.

At the HiGTE school where an high level of harmony and consistency existed, teachers maintained that their principal,

> the security we feel...just listening and being there when we feel low gives us the confidence to keep at it. She's also great at mediating problems among us, calming the waters before they get to a boiling point.

> Ms. G continues to grow and willingly admits mistakes herself. This creates an environment for risk-taking which made a big difference in the atmosphere-eliminating study halls because teachers hated them, students misbehaved in them, and they were unproductive. Though a bit of a drastic move at the time, people bought into it because it made good sense and time was spent truly making a difference with kids.

In contrast, paradoxical views throughout the interviews permeated the responses of teachers at the LoEFF school. Whereas, some teachers felt Mr. U's presence in the school set the tone for support, trust, collaboration, and risk-taking, others maintained that inconsistencies in behavior and favoritism promoted inequities and,

> negatively affects the spirit or any sense of trust. Principals need to set the tone for the building, what's expected, and do everything they can to see it happens. You know, walk the talk.

Teachers at the HiPTE school expressed an understanding for Ms. M's two-building assignment and the frustration she must feel for trying to be an effective leader in two schools [the elementary and middle school]. However, one teacher maintained,

> She sets the tone at this school. She is very interactive without being demanding, talking and problem solving with teachers whenever she can. Ms. M's open, honest and direct if she has a problem you. I appreciate that because I know where I stand and I know she acts according to her philosophy about what's best for kids. This helps me be a better teacher.

Believes in Teacher Capacity

A belief in teacher capacity, extending the concept of modeling behavior, was obvious at the HiPTE school since, for the most part, teachers were on their own.

Ms. M believes in us and will step in when needed, but is more than happy to get out of the way (this is a compliment) and let us do what we are trained to do...what we feel is best for kids. It makes you feel needed and important, missed when you are sent.

Expressing a sense of pride many teachers weaved stories around how they have "touched" students in a positive way. One teacher shared the "thrill" and impact of being selected "who's who" by a past student, and how teachers' work can perhaps "change a life for somebody."

This belief was equally evident at the HiGTE school but manifested itself more in comments suggesting group rather than individual efforts. One teacher commented on the lack of stratification,

> Regardless of whether you are a second year teacher or a 30 year veteran, there is an equal playing field and everyone is equally valued, respected for what they have to offer. We feel Ms. G respects us as professionals and we give her the same respect back.

Again, comments at the LoEFF school varied.

> He is not intrusive. I never feel I have a father looking down on me constantly to see if I'm doing what's best for kids. I think feeling independent is an important thing here. You sort of exist in your own world here, but he's there for us when you need him.

Others disagreed. One teacher shared his frustration about the directive nature of the principal regarding curricular issues.

> It is important for individuals to feel that they are important. Each of us has a value and I think that has to be kept up, not just in teaching but anywhere. You have to have some self-worth or your performance will go down. Administrators should return to the classroom once in a while to teach. They are in a different world. They need higher visibility to know what some of the problems really are, then trust that we as teachers can take care of them.

Inspires Group Purpose

The preliminary findings also indicated a significant relationship between inspires group purpose and teachers' GTE. Across the three study sites, principals were expected to create a shared vision centering on a student-centered atmosphere as part of the middle school philosophy. Reflecting on mutually-held goals at the HiPTE school, teachers stated,

> We are willing to put enormous amounts of effort into something we feel will pay off...high energy learning environments are strongly supported here. Ms. M encourages us to work together to organize our efforts and share in the ownership of our successes. We are here for a unified effort.

> Ms. M is very positive about her philosophy and makes it clear so we know where we are headed and it helps. She's always reading and sharing new concepts in education...quietly suggesting, like Cooperative Learning and Block Scheduling. It's subtle. She plants the seed, allows it time to grow, shares various ways ut use it, and gives teachers nformation pertinent to their subject areas to promote our success.

At the HiGTE school, a consistent team perspective existed where innovation and experimentation flourished. Staff avoided the normal pitfalls of being involved in multiple innovations typically resulting in poor follow through and fragmentation and credited their principal for regaining control of their school. A focus on behavior management and teamwork changed this school dramatically since the principal assumed her position three years ago. Through her support for a site-based effort, discipline problems have been cut to a fraction of pre-existing occurrences. Teachers expressed,

> If you treat students with respect and develop trust they will do what you ask. They are appreciative. As more and more families become dysfunctional, kids turn more and more to teachers. That's the principal's main theme...kid-focused. It starts at the top and it is reinforced in everything we do. It is the philosophy of many school districts, but not all districts practice what they preach.

Communication and organizational structures developed by Mr. U set the stage for learning at the LoEFF school. However, teachers capture the essence of opposing views of his conception of collaborative learning,

> He does his research and presents ideas to us. He tries to light the fire under us to get us going. He encourages risk-taking and has really motivated a collaborative team effort, as well as the freedom to make decisions that are most appropriately made in teams.

> Collaboration here is a concept on paper but not in reality. In fact, it is going just the opposite. Few decisions are made by teachers. Even our lunch tables are washed in a set way. People who have ideas that differ from the principal, are not sought out for their suggestions.

Two related subthemes emerged as critical to defining the principal's role in inspiring group purpose.

Promotes Teacher Empowerment and Decision-Making

Empowerment and shared decision making were at the core of teacher responses in all three schools. Teachers revealed the importance of feeling autonomous and respected for the knowledge they brought to their subject areas and the decisions they made. One teacher at the HiGTE school voiced the unified expression of her colleagues,

> Ms. G asks the opinion of staff members. She values and incorporates our opinions into the decisions she makes. In the process, she reinforces teachers' self esteem. She steps back and lets us to do what we need to do to be successful.

Others stressed Ms. G's focus on collaborative problem solving and promotion of shared governance,

> If we buy into the ideas we are using, then we are going to make them work. She lets us do our own thing because she trusts our judgement. Trust is a pretty big thing.

> Ms. G imposes no rules on teachers and constantly looks for our input, often letting us make the decisions on how the school is run. Like our Discipline Policy. It's easy to understand, fair, and acceptable to students, staff and parents and respects student dignity. It was established by our site-based management team and has eliminated most of the power plays and other confrontations. Ms. G exercises the 51% rule rarely, only when she feels there is no alternative or when teachers are at a crossroads. Then she feels it's her job to make the decision.

At the HiPTE school, teachers were left to make many independent and group decisions due to Ms. M's frequent absence. Comments reflected the obvious administrative responsibility delegated to teachers.

> She is not real visible and some days she's hardly seen. So it's hard for her to be at team planning meetings, handle many disciplinary problems, or just be here to make moment to moment decisions. She is perceived more as a guide than a commander, which gives us a feeling of ownership in what goes on around here.

Some teachers responded well to this situation, while others felt unprepared and expressed fear and hesitancy in assuming administrative duties. In essence, new roles and responsibilities imply new demands and result in greater accountability for student learning. When teachers are placed in-charge without adequate preparation in leadership skills, group process techniques, and effective change strategies, feelings of inadequacy may result in making teachers vulnerable and threaten their sense of efficacy.

Although teachers at the LoEFF school echoed the importance of empowerment and opportunities to make professional decisions, opposing views were once again argued,

> Mr. U gives us freedom, trusts us as professionals, encourages us to try new ideas and strategies, and finds the resources we need to get the job done. As a result of the power given to me, I feel successful. That's what it is - the power to change and do what is needed.

> Teachers here have a real sense of confidence in their own ability and they feel trusted for their expertise. There is freedom to utilize our talents. In my area, my principal gives me complete control over my program.

> Teachers have little say. They are powerless even in selecting curricular materials or involving issues with parents. Kids know it and when rules are enforced, they laugh about it because they know they can get out of it. To get support here, we all have to bond together. There's too much favoritism. The principal surrounds himself with people who don't say much or are in favor of his decisions. This is devastating.

Recognizes Teacher Efforts and Accomplishments

Comments from teacher respondents expanded the conceptionalization of provides contingent rewards, the only transactional leadership behavior in the five-dimensional framework, which was found to be significantly related to teacher efficacy. At each school, teachers maintained that providing rewards and recognition was exceedingly important in a profession where limited feedback is offered for tasks accomplished. Being recognized and rewarded "pump feelings of success and encourage us to do more for students and ourselves." Inducements were also visualized in a variety of ways across schools which motivated staff to persist in their efforts, "trust and freedom to do as we believe...public relations...awards... public announcements of accomplishments...feedback on job performance...special privileges...leadership opportunities...socials and celebrations" were among the many forms of recognition reported across schools Perks were critical to teachers' feelings of success at the HiGTE school, as "teachers have so few." One respondent contended,

> When you look at what can motivate a person [to grow], it is some of the small perks that come from your principal, like being sent to a conference, sharing a special project, or being asked to do different things for the district. Those are the true gifts and rewards - recognition among your peers and colleagues.

Despite the contradictory opinions among staff regarding the nature of leadership at the LoEFF school, most teachers reported that Mr. U engages in a wide variety of activities to motivate staff and show appreciation for their efforts: breakfasts, the daily news bulletin, new coverage, special notes, announcements over the PA and in individual teacher's classrooms, to name a few. However, two teachers revealed,

> It depends who you are. Some get recognized and some get ignored. If you just do your job and are not in the limelight or if you disagree [with the principal], then you are unappreciated. We get reprimanded...some praise, but then admonishment for petty things.

> People look to the principal for reinforcement. Instead, the students are the ones who do it, call back, visit, tell you that they learned a lot, call with questions. They are the ones who make it all worth being here.

Teachers at the HiPTE school were isolated in their classrooms, struggling with implementing the middle school philosophy due to structural constraints, and were rarely visited by Ms. M. Yet, none of the teachers admonished her, instead one teacher referred to her lack of visibility as a given,

> Though she spends little time in classrooms, she doesn't check up on teachers. She usually comes in once every two years to observe us for our formal observation, but I'm satisfied with that. Our staff here is small and we share a lot and support one another.

Nonetheless, I found many teachers noticeably distracted, particularly due to impending teacher cutbacks. Regardless of the verbal praise, notes, and public recognition given by Ms. M, the general tone was one of disappointment.

> Nobody ever tells you that you do a good job. It doesn't take a lot and would go a long way for teacher morale. Administrators should get out of their offices and into halls and classrooms. The dreams of what you can accomplish as an administrator tend to diminish with all the paperwork and meetings. They go into the field to influence kids, but they don't even get into classrooms to see what's going on. Our perks are from the kids and our peers. I think it's why we're so close here. We sense the isolation and toot each other's horns.

Provides Personal and Professional Support

Although no significant relationships were identified in the preliminary findings between provides support and teacher efficacy, the need for attention and support was pervasive throughout interviews and across themes. The perceived leadership style of the principal made a difference with teachers. Also, trust was essential. Principals who sought the opinions and ideas of their staff, then took action based on them, were viewed as encouragers, supporters, and democratic facilitators, descriptors used to characterize Ms. G. However, at the LoEFF school, where divisiveness and paradoxical opinions existed, negativity influenced the tone as teachers voiced feelings of "betrayal...impotence...abandonment." These viewpoints greatly affected teachers' sense of value, enough to evoke thoughts of "leaving the field" and "longing for retirement."

Teachers in high efficacy schools conveyed that their principals listen, care, facilitate their needs, recognize their efforts and accomplishments, and support them concerning personal matters. On the other hand, without providing resources and up-dated materials, constructive feedback, visible and accessible instructional leadership, and support regarding parent and student issues, personal support from principals alone will not affect significant change in teacher and student outcomes.

Holds High Performance Expectations

Similar to quantitative findings, the principal's role in holding high performance expectations rarely emerged during the interviews. In all three schools, expectations were linked to each principal's commitment to a student-centered middle school philosophy. Although all three principals communicated a sense of vision for the school, the HiGTE school was the only school in which shared goals were evident which focused staff efforts. On the other hand, Ms. M promoted interdisciplinary and student-involved instruction, yet she was not in classrooms often enough to hold teachers accountable. As a result, Ms. M's expectations focused more on maintaining relationships, climate, and student discipline, rather than on issues involving curriculum and instruction.

High expectations were also held for staff at the LoEFF school, yet contradictions were expressed in the way these expectations were managed and monitored. It seemed teacher efficacy was more closely related to the expectations teachers placed on themselves rather than on the expectations of their principals.

Additional Leadership Themes

Additional leadership themes impacting teachers' sense of efficacy emerged that were not explicit in Leithwood's transformational framework as measured by The Nature of Leadership Survey (1993). These themes included: creating a positive climate by managing student behavior, promoting a sense of community, fostering teamwork and collaboration, and encouraging innovation and growth (see Table 3).

Managing Student Behavior

A high priority for Ms. G at the HiGTE school was in creating a positive climate. Teachers expressed appreciation for Ms. G's expectations, support, and active involvement in promoting a tone evidenced by smiles, laughter, and fun-loving humor, continually apparent throughout my visit in every location in the building. One teacher conveyed,

> I think that the principal's support is probably the most important thing in sustaining an environment conducive to student learning and teacher commitment. I am comfortable with Ms. because when you have problems with students and parents, she tells you when you are doing a good job, and that gives you the confidence and security to deal with problems.

Consistent adherence to the newly initiated Discipline Policy developed by the site-based management team and high expectations on the part of the principal has changed a school with chronic behavior problems numbering 1,982 three years ago, to approximately one a week. However, as teachers have gained control of their school, Ms. G has become less involved in minor problems and relies on the assistance of the vice-principal. As one teacher asserted, "She is the boss and the kids know it. If anything major happens, she is involved." Others conveyed,

> Ms. G will call class meetings by grade level in the auditorium, share concerns and upcoming events, behaviors expected of students, and what behaviors are actually occurring. Her expectations are shared the first day of school and teachers repeat and reinforce them often. We believe that if kids know what we are expecting of them they will live up to those expectations.
>
> We've regained control of our school and our classrooms. Teachers are teaching and students are learning. It's the best in the 24 years that I have been here. Discipline is the cornerstone to any successful building and it requires principals to take an active part.

Expressions of frustration among teachers at the HiPTE centered around two issues: the pending budget cuts, in which they had virtually no control, and discipline problems, which strongly affected the tone of the building. Generally comments were positive, however, emotions escalated with stories of major disturbances, student fights and confrontations. Several teachers reiterated a story of Ms. M canceling a school dance just to avoid problems. One related:

> It's contagious, it spreads. The principal's role is to put an end to it and she does that well. She put her foot down and made some uncomfortable decisions. She took the heat from students and parents for what she believed in. She canceled a dance and that was it!. She is very firm that way.

Although Ms. M is not always in the building to handle office problems, etc., she is admired for the personal responsibility she takes in supervising after-school suspension. Also, according to the teachers, she "tunes into a lot just in passing teachers in the hallway and by walking around." One teacher maintained,

> Ms. M has very little patience for people who screw up the process and her response is quick. As difficult as it is in her absence, she is proactive in promoting a positive climate. She is proud of the program and the work that we do, so anyone who gets in the way has to deal with her personally. She lets you know you screwed up big time, yet it's amazing, the kids never talk of her with resentment or disrespect.

Discipline was the source of increased stress and conflict at the LoEFF school, yet few shed blame on the principal. Most agreed that Mr. U spent a great deal of time dealing with discipline problems which seriously affected the climate of the building. In support of his efforts, one teacher reported discipline as,

> a growing problem through the years in which general respect for teachers has declined. But at least the principal has somewhat more power. It's a priority and he's sort of the ultimate answer. Mr. U's presence has an effect on students, which in essence, has an effect on my teaching.

Yet another teacher expressed frustration for his inconsistencies with students and dealing with parents.

> If you are called in without notice on a parent's accusation, it puts you on the defensive and allows you no time to prepare. You are alone. The teacher always loses. The kids win and they know it. You feel impotent and it affects how you function in the classroom.

Promoting a Sense of Community

Unquestionably, the respondents at the HiGTE school maintained that Ms. G was committed to the success of staff and students. Whether a new teacher or veteran, "she sees her purpose as helping everyone succeed" and apparently does this in a way that eliminates divisions across subject areas and grade levels, and fosters a sense of worth and belongingness. For example, a special education teacher stated that Ms. G was a strong advocate for special education students and reinforced the goals of the department throughout the school. Her advocacy had a positive affect on openness to inclusion as she reinforced staff for their receptiveness. Also, teachers revealed an openness to change, security in experimentation, and sense of family starting at the top.

> Change is made with the most support possible. Ed [the superintendent] and Ms. G release teachers during school time for work that needs to be done related to curriculum and staff development. Our school board and community also trust that we are really on task, have a definite goal in mind, and don't question what we do or how we spend our time.

> When it comes to change, if teachers aren't willing to pull together and try something new, what can we expect from our students? Ms. G has been a strong force behind us as role models for students to break down the fear because our students will change so many more times than we ever thought of changing.

> I've told everyone that I've ever talked to that I will never leave this school district and I won't. We do so many things as a staff in and out of school, socially once a month. We are a caring family.

Due to the size and intimacy of staff at the HiPTE school, teachers were aware of activities in other teacher's classrooms. "We compare notes, share, and help one another. It's a very caring family atmosphere where people cooperate and everyone pulls together when someone is down." However, the stories were about individuals and their talents rather than on cooperative efforts related to common school goals.

In contrast to each of the high efficacy schools, some teachers at the LoEFF school shared a similar sense of "family" among staff and voiced strong administrative, parent, and community support. It seemed the staff genuinely cared for each other, and in some ways, viewed themselves as cohesive. At the same time, a great deal of conflict existed.

> Everyone is a family. I think it is just a mutually supportive situation here. One of the strong points is being able to get along with one another. Yet, I also find myself playing the occasional buffer, listener, and mediator of conflict within my team.

The following examples reflected the contentious climate of the school which interfered with the collaborative goals established.

> When people are on a real downer, kids are terrible in the halls and generally unengaged. It spreads school-wide. The climate is effected when teachers are short...with everything and everyone, even the good kids. It keeps escalating! As I look around there are a lot of storm clouds...There are a lot of adults and children that have bad days all the time.

> What's crucial to an effective leader is being an honest people-person who makes people feel comfortable - a good communicator who finds out from staff if there are problems in communication and if they have suggestions to alleviate them - someone who develops trust among staff and a sense of common purpose - someone who doesn't alienate him-or herself and make lateral decisions. Principals are seen as having a total school perspective, and it's difficult to persuade teachers to change (teachers don't like change anyway), yet it is more difficult if you don't have their trust.

The next two subthemes were perceived by teachers as critical components of the school as a learning community.

Encourages Innovation and Continual Growth

All principals in the case study schools had a vision for enhancing the collective capacity of their people to keep student learning at the heart of their vision. Ms. G and Mr. U were also recognized for exploring current trends in education, continually expanding their knowledge base through professional workshops, meetings, and coursework, and encouraging innovation and creativity. Both were perceived as creating a focus and being resourceful at garnering materials, money, substitutes, people, and time to move in the direction of school interests. In addition, both took risks which were not always met with unified acceptance. For instance, Ms. G

> tried to organize a staff development program for teachers based on what she thought we needed. She took some courses and was really inspired. There were a lot of schedule changes which affected the structure of teams and impacted curriculum. People get real touchy about that. Subs were garnered for the school management team and though consensus was sought, it boiled down to each team making their own decision as to how to proceed.

Similarly, Mr. U had inspired a program called, "Totally Awesome Choices", to change the perceptions of the Advisor-Advisee program to encourage collaboration, and relationships between students and staff. For the most part, teachers spoke of this bi-annual program favorably, yet some felt it had out lived its productiveness and had a limited affect on collaboration. "Everybody does their own thing and many teachers still don't get out of their classrooms." However, despite a couple of "misses", teachers credited these principals for their commitment and support for individual and collective practice.

Ms. M's split assignment, on the other hand, was a major constraint in achieving anything more than encouragement for engaging in a variety of professional experiences characterized by fragmentation. For instance, a strong commitment to America On-Line was initiated, yet only two faculty members were skilled and highly involved. Limited training and follow up, issues involving time, lack of money and appropriate technology only added to the frustration of teachers.

Fosters Teamwork and Collaboration

Teachers at the HiGTE school maintained that working as a team has compelled teachers to look for patterns in student behavior and learn successful approaches and strategies from one another. Teachers were expected to work in teams and attend regularly scheduled meetings focusing on problem solving, curriculum and instructional issues, and monitoring progress toward school goals. Though time-consuming at first, staff have come to value the collegiality and sharing. One teacher expressed,

> I have grown to truly appreciate my peers and Ms. G for helping me become a better teacher. We bond and I like that daily contact. Everyone is working together and we are impacting students in ways we never did before.

In line with the philosophy of middle level education at the LoEFF school, teachers recalled the first year of being divided into teams, and being reluctant to change. For the most part, success became a motivator to persist, however, teachers expressed differences across teams typical of previous comments.

> Some teams are compatible and enjoy strong communication through weekly meetings. They discuss important issues, problem solve, and just generally help each other out. Others are less cohesive and at times volatile, yet they are making progress too...in their own way.

> There is a hierarchy, not a group of teachers working for the same goal. We get a lot of "you shalls" and really have no say. It puts you on the defensive. It's an insult, because you are led to believe that you are being empowered to make decisions a part of a team.

Undoubtedly, teachers were sincere in their perceptions of family spirit, yet a lack of unity distracted staff from instructional purposes. Moreover, conflict and contention eroded cohesive efforts and trust in one another.

DISCUSSION

Qualitative data have documented and expanded on preliminary findings. By conducting a more in-depth probe into specific leadership behaviors affecting teacher efficacy in high and low efficacy schools, ten behaviors grouped into six different areas, were identified (see Figure 1).

Though group purpose may affect staff individually, statistical results suggested that its strength lies in the impact on the group as a whole--what teachers feel they can do together to succeed (GTE). Comments throughout interviews relating to *inspiring group purpose* reflected notions of "we" and "us" rather than " I" and "me," a focus on the organization itself rather than isolated classroom performance. The impact of group purpose was strongest at the HiGTE school where Ms. G was viewed as an active, visible, and respected leader, who fostered commitment to teamwork by establishing collaborative structures and holding staff accountable for achieving school goals.

This perception coincides with Robert's (1995) description of a transformation leader who "facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment, and the restructuring of their systems for goal accomplishment (p. 1024). However, the essence of transformational leadership is more complex than principals simply engaging in specific behaviors. Rather, it is manifested in principals' values, beliefs, and communication of goals that teachers find meaningful. The degree to which teachers were empowered to make decisions affecting their work in these schools, reflected each principal's belief in teacher capacity, which in turn, affected teachers' perceptions of self and their abilities. Attempts to inspire group purpose without considering these factors will be seriously impeded as evidenced in the LoEFF school.

The dimension of *modeling behavior or* setting an example that is consistent with the values the leader embraces, significantly impacted teacher efficacy in the original study. For the

most part, as definitions of leadership have emerged, the realities of principals' daily work life require a wide variety of complex tasks requiring perpetual cognitive shifts (Peterson, 1981). It is in these shifts that principals model what they believe and value and inspire others to achieve excellence by providing meaning and challenge. In contexts where goals are shared and attained, feelings of success occur for students and staff alike. Through their example, principals facilitate teaching and learning through their everyday behavior, and again, convey a sense of certainty that teachers can make a difference.

In addition, the importance of two transformation leadership factors: recognizes teacher efforts and accomplishment and provides personal and professional support, not found to be significantly related to teacher efficacy in the preliminary findings, were voiced as critical across interviews. Both factors relate closely to Lortie's (1975) classic study in that many teachers experience significant doubts about the value of their work with students. His conception of uncertainty suggests that teachers have few mechanisms to evaluate their efforts or to assess their relative impact on long term student outcomes. Though principals recognize the importance of instructional leadership, many continue to spend an excessive amount of time on managerial issues preventing them from engaging in classroom observations to support and feedback. Moreover, time and structural constraints impede collaborative opportunities among peers.

The emphasis placed on establishing a positive school climate through managing student behavior is supported in the literature. As Rosenholtz, Bassler, and Hoover-Dempsey (1986) studied organizational conditions which promoted teacher learning and motivation, they found the principal's role in managing student behavior facilitated collective responsibility for student learning and problem solving. In addition, Moore and Esselman (1992) studied the relationships among sense of efficacy, teacher empowerment, and school climate as perceived by 1,802 K-12 teachers and found teachers' sense of efficacy to be significantly related to both factors which were greatly influenced by principals. As evident in the LoEFF school, contention arising from a divisive climate, escalating student discipline problems, and paradoxical views regarding support, recognition, empowerment and decision-making were deemed within the power of the principal to control. When these conditions exist, as shared by a faction of teacher respondents, feelings of despair, uncertainty, loneliness, and vulnerability greatly negatively affect teachers' sense of efficacy as well as the entire school community.

Although teachers from all three schools characterized their staff as a "family", only the HiGTE school approached a sense of community as defined by Sergiovanni (1994):

> Communities are collections of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are together bound to a set of shard ideas and ideals. This bonding and binding is tight enough to transform them from a collection of *Is* into a collective *we*. As a *we*, members are part of a tightly knit web of meaningful relationships. (p. 218)

In promoting a sense of community, Ms. G clearly represented the role of leader in articulating the purposes of the Harmony school community and enhancing the collective capacity of staff to create and pursue these purposes through trust and mutual understanding (Senge, 1990). By fostering teamwork and collaboration, and encouraging innovation and continual growth, Ms. G created structures within an environment that promoted collective learning and discussions about what staff members want to create.

Finally, teacher respondents clearly differed in their perceptions of principal impact across high and low efficacy schools, thereby reinforcing the linkage between principals' leadership behavior and teachers' sense of efficacy. Responses to queries at Harmony Middle School, the HiGTE school, were remarkably consistent. Teachers were highly favorable of the visible and democratic leadership style modeled by Ms. G, and, as a result, felt empowered to make professional decisions they deemed necessary to pursue shared goals. Also Ms. G's student-centered vision and development of structures for teamwork and collaboration promoted a strong sense of community. Within this community, Ms. G promoted a climate of trust and respect where teachers learned from one another and embraced change and innovative. The climate was also enhanced by Ms. G's active involvement with the Discipline Policy, a teacher-initiated behavior management plan that established expected norms defining a "way of life" at Harmony.

As a result of the tone set by Ms. G, caring and supportive relationships were nurtured and a variety of meaningful methods were used to provide recognition and support for teacher efforts and accomplishments. Consequently, respondents shared an extreme sense of pride in their students, in their school, and in their work. Together, these strengths had a powerful effect on teachers' general sense of efficacy, or what teachers perceived they could accomplish collectively.

In contrast, at Homewood Middle School, the HiPTE school, Ms. M's responsibilities were split between two schools, thereby adding occasional administrative duties to an already full teaching load. However, data did not suggest that Ms. M's absence had a negative effect on teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student learning. Rather, they took pride in sharing many of the effective and exciting things they had done at Homewood.

Despite Ms. M's regular absence from the school, she communicated her vision and promoted a sense of empowerment in her staff through trust and respect. Her belief in teachers as professionals seemed to strengthen the decisions teachers made regarding curricular issues and management of student behavior. Discipline problems were not a major issue at Homewood, yet when support was needed, teachers viewed Ms. M as open and respectful of their ideas and decisions. When discipline problems were more severe, Ms. M set firm expectations, made tough decisions, and managed student behavior effectively.

As a result of Ms. M's student-centered vision at Homewood Middle School, she encouraged risk-taking and innovation, yet visions were seldom spoken as "ours." Moreover, since she was not actively involved in the implementation of innovative ideas and programs herself, it was difficult to hold teachers accountable for applying them in practice. Therefore, a sense of shared vision was difficult to achieve and teachers tended to be more isolated than they desired.

In addition, budget constraints resulting in layoffs and out-dated physical and organizational structures also interfered with the aspirations of the principal and her staff to implement components of a true middle school concept. Despite these constraints on the principal's influence, teachers at Homewood believed in themselves and one another, perhaps as a result of the trust and confidence Ms. M shared with them. The strength of Homewood was found in its congenial, family-like and well-disciplined setting, however, it lacked the collaborative, driving spirit of Harmony.

As noted repeatedly, principal leadership behaviors supporting teacher efficacy at Pleasantview Middle School, the LoEFF school, emerged as consistent in importance, yet contradictory in practice. Similar to Ms. G, Mr. U exhibited an overt leadership style, described by some as highly democratic and empowering, and others s as autocratic and dictatorial. Also like Ms. G, Mr. U placed a strong emphasis on innovation, risk-taking, and continuous growth. Teams, which often included Mr. U, met regularly and frequently to share opinions and ideas that could be considered in future decision-making, but fell short of developing a sense of community needed to mobilize efforts toward a common vision.

The most emotionally-charged issue at Pleasantview related to the lack of empowerment and decision-making allowed to teachers. Some teachers strongly supported decisions made, while others felt that decisions were actually made by a minority of people. Though teachers felt strongly that Mr. U valued all subject areas, some believed he favored certain people. Feelings of distrust were expressed pervasively across many interviews, revealing resentment of "selective" support and recognition among staff. At times it was mentioned that those who supported the ideas and decisions of the administration were acknowledged and approached for their ideas, whereas those who "made waves" were ignored and made to feel less valuable.

A sense of shared vision was evident at Pleasantview, but a divisive climate impeded progress in meeting school goals and students were often seen as reflecting the contentious tone of the building. When behavioral issues emerged, some teachers felt that Mr. U treated them unprofessionally by supporting students and parents at their expense deepening feelings of incompetency. On the other hand, other teachers praised Mr. U for his high expectations and active involvement with student discipline. Though goals and efforts at Pleasantview were similar to those of Harmony and Homewood Middle Schools, success was less evident due to disagreements over student discipline, an unstable and contentious professional work environment, and a number of other unresolved issues related to teacher empowerment, decision-making, support, and recognition. The link between the paradoxical views of Mr. U's leadership and teachers' low sense of efficacy was evident.

IMPLICATIONS

Following are implications and recommendations for administrative practice and preparation and further study related to principals' leadership behavior and teacher efficacy. First, the comparative case-study design used in this study to identify emerging themes across schools emulated past beliefs about the impact of transformational leadership behavior on teachers' sense of efficacy (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1993; Hipp & Bredeson, 1995). Moreover, this approach enriched preliminary findings by clarifying and extending meaning and field-based examples documenting principal behaviors which have a positive affect on the organizational conditions of schools, and subsequently, the potential to mediate the affects of teacher influence on student achievement. Stone (1992) contended,

> Principals who will succeed in transforming schools will be those whose leadership corrals disparate individual interests into a collective movement toward a common vision, and who elevate human performance in the process.

Ultimately the goal of principal leadership is student learning, therefore, further study is needed to explore if indeed these mediating affects impact student achievement and motivation.

Rosenholtz, Bassler and Hoover-Dempsey (1986) synthesized research on organizational antecedents of teacher learning and found that, in effective schools, "principals set the tone of a school and in many ways shape the organizational conditions under which teachers work" (p. 92). Further, they argued that principals' actions conveyed a belief that teacher and student learning outcomes are closely connected to teacher effort. Since teachers and students are constantly looking for symbolic cues regarding what is valued in school, a deliberate emphasis on the 10 behaviors identified in this study needs to permeate the principal's daily work.

Second, growing criticism of America's schools has accentuated feelings of despair among teachers while school leaders and policy makers mandate school reform. As reported in the 27th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools (Elam, Rose, & Gallup 1995), chronic student discipline problems and unhealthy school environments continue to intensify feelings of uncertainty and interfere with improvement efforts. In response, principals who set the tone for teaching and learning are more apt to gain the trust of staff. As one respondent expressed, "It is very difficult to persuade teachers to change. Teachers don't like change anyway. It is much more difficult if you don't have their trust. Trust is everything."

Third, relationships between general teaching efficacy, schools as professional learning communities, and implementation of innovation also need to be explored. As a result of reform and improvement efforts, issues of empowerment and collective learning create new challenges for educators. In essence, new roles, rules, and responsibilities imply new demands and result in greater accountability for student learning. Many teachers feel unprepared and isolated. They continue to function within antiquated structures and parameters without support. Systematic inquiry is critical to divert feelings of inadequacy that make teachers vulnerable and threaten their sense of efficacy.

Fourth, according to Bandura, one's beliefs become manifested in their personal and professional decisions, the effort they expend, and their persistence to continually grow. It is apparent that principals can either reinforce feelings of efficacy or feelings of futility as documented across high and low efficacy schools. Those preparing both practicing and aspiring school administrators should assist students in predicting changes produced by selective behaviors and interventions.

In summary, this study reveals direct principals behaviors, as well as indirect symbolic forms of instructional leadership that influence teachers' work and its outcomes. It also support the significance of an increased focus on teacher efficacy if a strong sense of efficacy motivates teachers to higher levels of competence and success (Hipp, 1996). Nonetheless, if school leaders continue to ignore teachers' sense of efficacy and environmental conditions affecting their work, then committed young teachers, as well as experienced teachers, will begin to question their potential to affect change in student behavior; and worse yet, may decide to leave the profession.

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TABLE 1

Descriptive Data of Three Case Study Sites

School Name	Location	School Enrollment	Grade Levels	Number of Teachers	% of Teachers Interviewed	Principal Data
Harmony Middle School (High GTE)	Small Midwestern Blue-Collar city	445	6-8	29	12 - 41% 6 Females 6 Males	Female 3rd year as principal Taught Social Studies in current school for 5 years
Homewood Middle School (High PTE)	Small Midwestern Rural Community	180	6-8	12	10 - 83% 4 Females 6 Males	Female 4th year as principal Taught 18 years in K-12 and higher education settings: regular education, Title 1, Reading Specialist, Supervisor of student teaching
Pleasantview Middle School (Low Efficacy)	Small Progressive City in the Midwest	448	7-8	23	12 - 43% 7 Females 5 Males	Male 8th year as principal Taught Title 1 for 4 years in Middle and H. S., Social Studies in H. S. 4 years, Assistant Principal 1 year

TABLE 2

A Sampling of Teacher Interview Questions

- What does your principal do to support <u>your</u> work as a teacher?
- As you look at your school in general, what makes teachers feel good about their teaching?
- What does your principal do to support teachers in <u>their</u> work?
- What does a "really good day" look like at _____ Middle School?
- What does a "really bad day" look like at _____ Middle School?
- Do these problems related to "bad days" affect others? How aware is your principal and what is her/his role in dealing with them?

TABLE 3

Dimensions of Transformation Leadership Behavior Derived from The Nature of Leadership Survey

Leader Behavior	*Leader Descriptor*
Models behavior	sets an example for staff to follow that is consistent with the values the leader embraces. The leader focuses on enhancing teacher capacity beliefs and sense of efficacy and invites respect, trust, and admiration. Modeling fosters perceptions of dynamic and changing roles.
Inspires group purpose	develops, articulates, and inspires others with a vision of the future, which when value laden, promotes cooperation, collaboration and unconditional commitment toward common goals and continual professional growth.
Provides contingent rewards	clarifies the relationship between teachers' work and organizational reward structures. The leader provides informative feedback about performance to enhance capacity beliefs, commitment, effort and job satisfaction.
Holds high performance expectations	demonstrates expectations for excellence, quality, and high performance. The leader's expectations focus teachers' perceptions on the gap between the school's vision and its current status.
Provides support	shows respect for staff and concern about personal feelings and needs. This behavior encourages risk-taking and offers support in problem solving. Leaders challenge their staffs to reexamine assumptions about their work and rethink how it can be performed, thereby drawing attention to discrepancies between current and desired practices.